GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
AGRICULTURE
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1135
ANSWERED ON:22.07.2002
PERMISSION TO GROW BT COTTON
K.H. MUNIYAPPA

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have permitted farmers to grow BT Cotton;

(b) if so, whether the Government have asked scientists of the country to study the implications of BT Cotton farming; and

(c) if so, the outcome of the study?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI HUKUMDEO NARAYAN YADAV)

(a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Before according permission for cultivation of three Bt cotton hybrids namely Bt-MECH-12, Bt-MECH-162, and Bt-MECH-18 different Government departments were involved in assessment of agronomic advantage, and biosafety aspects including animal health.

(c) Agronomic evaluation indicated superiority of Bt Cotton hybrids tested in the All India Coodinated Cotton Improvement Project of ICAR. Food safety data indicated that Bt Cotton is safe since its Cotton seed meal is nutritionally equivalent to non-Bt Cotton meal. Data indicated that Bt Cotton hybrids will not pose hazards to public health and will provide protectionfrom menace of the bollworm pest. The three hybrids were recommended for commercial cultivation with certain stipulated conditions. The Government had directed the applicant (M/s Maharashtra Hybrid Seeds Co., Mumbai) to generate information on possible impact of Bt Cotton on non-target insects, crops, susceptibility to bollworms, etc. on yearly basis.